

WE CLAIM:

1. A method of authorising an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program, said core computer program being installed, said method comprising the 5 steps of:

reading module signature data associated with said additional computer program module;

reading core signature data and other signature data associated with said core computer program;

10 comparing said module signature data with said core signature data and said other signature data; and

refusing authorisation of said additional computer program module for use with said core computer program unless said module signature data matches at least one of said core signature data and said other signature data.

15 2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said other signature data is user signature data.

3. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said addition computer program module is 20 refused authorisation for use with said core computer program unless said module signature data matches both of said core signature data and said other signature data.

4. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said module signature data, said core signature data and said other signature data include public key infrastructure signatures.

25 5. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said other signature data is associated with said core computer program upon installation of said core computer program.

6. A method as claimed in claim 5 wherein said other signature data is embedded within 30 said core computer program.

7. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said user signature data is embedded within said core computer program by applying a user specific patch to said core computer program.

8. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said core signature data is associated with said core computer program upon generation of said core computer program.
9. A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein said core signature data is embedded within
5 said core computer program.
10. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said core computer program is an anti-virus
computer program.
- 10 11. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein said anti-virus computer program operates
with at least one updateable anti-virus computer program module.
- 15 12. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein said module signature data associated with
said anti-virus computer program module is said core signature data.
13. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said additional computer program module
provides functionality independent of that of said core computer program.
- 20 14. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein said additional computer program module
provides does not relate to anti-virus protection.
15. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said additional computer program module is
operable to patch an installed computer program.
- 25 16. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said additional computer program module is
operable to install another computer program.
17. A method of generating an additional computer program module for use with a core
computer program when authorised in accordance with the method of claim 1, said method
30 comprising the steps of:
writing said additional computer program module;
receiving new user information from a new user of said additional computer program
module;

generating user signature data specific to said new user in dependence upon said new user information;

associating said user signature data with said additional computer program module; and

5 providing said additional computer program module with associated user signature data to said new user.

18. A method as claimed in claim 17, wherein said step of generating uses a tool produced by a provider of said core computer program.

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19. A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein said step of associating uses a tool produced by a provider of said core computer program.

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20. A method of generating an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program when authorised in accordance with the method of claim 1, said method comprising the steps of:

writing said additional computer program module;

generating signature data specific to said additional computer program module in dependence upon said additional computer program module using a tool produced by a provider of said core computer program;

associating said signature data with said additional computer program module; and

20 providing said additional computer program module with associated signature data to said new user.

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21. A method of generating an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program when authorised in accordance with the method of claim 1, said method comprising the steps of:

writing said additional computer program module;

providing said additional computer program module to a new user;

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said new user associating user signature data with said additional computer program module;

providing said additional computer program module and associated user signature data to a provider of said core computer program;

said provider of said core computer program associating core signature data with said additional computer program module and associated user signature data;

providing said additional computer program module and associated user signature data and core signature data to said new user.

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22. Apparatus for authorising an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program, said core computer program being installed, said apparatus comprising:

first reading logic operable to read module signature data associated with said additional computer program module;

10 second reading logic operable to read core signature data and other signature data associated with said core computer program;

a comparitor operable to compare said module signature data with said core signature data and said module signature data; and

15 authorisation refusal logic operable to refuse authorisation said additional computer program module for use with said core computer program unless said module signature data matches at least one of said core signature data and said other signature data.

23. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said other signature data is user signature data.

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24. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said addition computer program module is refused authorisation for use with said core computer program unless said module signature data matches both of said core signature data and said other signature data.

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25. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said module signature data, said core signature data and said other signature data include public key infrastructure signatures.

26. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said other signature data is associated with said core computer program upon installation of said core computer program.

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27. Apparatus as claimed in claim 26, wherein said other signature data is embedded within said core computer program.

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28. Apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein said other signature data is embedded within said core computer program by applying a user specific patch to said core computer program.
- 5 29. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said core signature data is associated with said core computer program upon generation of said core computer program.
30. Apparatus as claimed in claim 29, wherein said core signature data is embedded within said core computer program.
- 10 31. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said core computer program is an anti-virus computer program.
32. Apparatus as claimed in claim 31, wherein said anti-virus computer program operates with at least one updateable anti-virus computer program module.
- 15 33. Apparatus as claimed in claim 32, wherein said module signature data associated with said anti-virus computer program module is said core signature data.
- 20 34. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said additional computer program module provides functionality independent of that of said core computer program.
35. Apparatus as claimed in claim 31, wherein said additional computer program module provides does not relate to anti-virus protection.
- 25 36. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said additional computer program module is operable to patch an installed computer program.
37. Apparatus as claimed in claim 22, wherein said additional computer program module is operable to install another computer program.
- 30 38. Apparatus for generating an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program when authorised using the apparatus of claim 22, said apparatus comprising:

a receiver operable to receive new user information from a new user of said additional computer program module;

a user signature generating logic operable to generate user signature data specific to said new user in dependence upon said new user information;

5 associating logic operable to associate said user signature data with an additional computer program module; and

transmission logic operable to provide said additional computer program module with associated user signature data to said new user.

10 39. Apparatus as claimed in claim 38, wherein said user signature generating logic uses a tool produced by a provider of said core computer program.

40. Apparatus as claimed in claim 38, wherein said associating logic uses a tool produced by a provider of said core computer program.

15 41. Apparatus for generating an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program when authorised using the apparatus of claim 22, said apparatus comprising:

signature generating logic operable to generate signature data specific to said additional computer program module in dependence upon said additional computer program module using a tool produced by a provider of said core computer program;

associating logic operable to associate said signature data with said additional computer program module; and

transmission logic operable to provide said additional computer program module with 25 associated signature data to said new user.

42. Apparatus of generating an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program when authorised using the apparatus of claim 22, said apparatus comprising:

30 first transmission logic operable to provide said additional computer program module to a new user;

first associating logic operable to associate user signature data with said additional computer program module;

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second transmission logic operable to provide said additional computer program module and associated user signature data to a provider of said core computer program;

second associating logic operable to associate core signature data with said additional computer program module and associated user signature data;

5 third transmission logic operable to provide said additional computer program module and associated user signature data and core signature data to said new user.

43. A computer program product carrying a computer program for controlling a computer to authorise an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program, 10 said core computer program being installed, said computer program comprising:

first reading code operable to read module signature data associated with said additional computer program module;

second reading code operable to read core signature data and other signature data associated with said core computer program;

15 comparison code operable to compare said module signature data with said core signature data and said module signature data; and

authorisation refusal code operable to refuse authorisation said additional computer program module for use with said core computer program unless said module signature data matches at least one of said core signature data and said other signature data.

20 44. A computer program product as claimed in claim 43, wherein said other signature data is user signature data.

45. A computer program product as claimed in claim 43, wherein said addition computer 25 program module is refused authorisation for use with said core computer program unless said module signature data matches both of said core signature data and said other signature data.

46. A computer program product as claimed in claim 43, wherein said module signature data, said core signature data and said other signature data include public key infrastructure 30 signatures.

47. A computer program product as claimed in claim 43, wherein said other signature data is associated with said core computer program upon installation of said core computer program.

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48. A computer program product as claimed in claim 47, wherein said other signature data is embedded within said core computer program.
- 5 49. A computer program product as claimed in claim 44, wherein said other signature data is embedded within said core computer program by applying a user specific patch to said core computer program.
- 10 50. A computer program product as claimed in claim 43, wherein said core signature data is associated with said core computer program upon generation of said core computer program.
- 15 51. A computer program product as claimed in claim 50, wherein said core signature data is embedded within said core computer program.
52. A computer program product as claimed in claim 43, wherein said core computer program is an anti-virus computer program.
- 20 53. A computer program product as claimed in claim 52, wherein said anti-virus computer program operates with at least one updateable anti-virus computer program module.
54. A computer program product as claimed in claim 53, wherein said module signature data associated with said anti-virus computer program module is said core signature data.
- 25 55. A computer program product as claimed in claim 43, wherein said additional computer program module provides functionality independent of that of said core computer program.
56. A computer program product as claimed in claim 52, wherein said additional computer program module provides does not relate to anti-virus protection.
- 30 57. A computer program product as claimed in claim 43, wherein said additional computer program module is operable to patch an installed computer program.

58. A computer program product as claimed in claim 43, wherein said additional computer program module is operable to install another computer program.

59. A computer program product carrying a computer program for controlling a computer to generate an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program when authorised using the computer program of claim 43, said computer program comprising:

receiver code operable to receive new user information from a new user of said additional computer program module;

10 user signature generating code operable to generate user signature data specific to said new user in dependence upon said new user information;

associating code operable to associate said user signature data with an additional computer program module; and

transmission code operable to providing said additional computer program module with associated user signature data to said new user.

15 60. A computer program product as claimed in claim 59, wherein said user signature generating code uses a tool produced by a provider of said core computer program.

20 61. A computer program product as claimed in claim 59, wherein said associating code uses a tool produced by a provider of said core computer program.

62. A computer program product carrying a computer program for controlling a computer to generate an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program when authorised using the computer program of claim 43, said computer program comprising:

25 signature generating code operable to generate signature data specific to said additional computer program module in dependence upon said additional computer program module using a tool produced by a provider of said core computer program;

associating code operable to associate said signature data with said additional computer program module; and

30 transmission code operable to provide said additional computer program module with associated signature data to said new user.

63. A computer program product carrying a computer program for controlling a computer to generate an additional computer program module for use with a core computer program when authorised using the computer program of claim 43, said computer program comprising:
- first transmission code operable to provide said additional computer program module
- 5 to a new user;
- first associating code operable to associate user signature data with said additional computer program module;
- second transmission code operable to provide said additional computer program module and associated user signature data to a provider of said core computer program;
- 10 second associating code operable to associate core signature data with said additional computer program module and associated user signature data;
- third transmission code operable to provide said additional computer program module and associated user signature data and core signature data to said new user.